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## Eye Worm of the Dog

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# CLINICAL MEDICINE

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**Eye Worm of the Dog.** On December 29, 1942, the Veterinary Pathology Department of Iowa State College received three nematodes from Dr. J. S. Dick, Jr., Minneapolis, Minn. These worms were taken from the eye of a nine-year old female Samoyede. The owner stated that the dog was with him in California during the past summer and the worms were observed in the dog's eye about three weeks before their removal by Dr. Dick. They were identified by Dr. E. A. Benbrook as *Thelazia californiensis*, the eye worm of the dog. This is the first time this parasite has been reported outside of California, where they were apparently acquired by this dog.

The life cycle of this parasite is not known. It is thought, however, that some insect is an intermediate host. The worms are slender, whitish and translucent. The male is 12-13 mm. long and the female is 15-17 mm. in length.

The parasites cause damage by irritating the conjunctiva which eventually results in a mild or severe conjunctivitis. If this condition is not treated promptly, complications such as keratitis and secondary infection may occur.

Treatment of ocular thelaziasis has received little attention. The most common practice is to desensitize the eye and then remove the worms with forceps or a small cotton swab. The eye should then be irrigated with saturated aqueous boric acid solution. More than one treatment may be necessary in order to remove all of them. The after-treatment should consist of daily washing of the eye with

some mild astringent until the conjunctivitis has subsided.

In view of the probability that arthropods serve as intermediate hosts, it is advisable to keep all kennels and runs free from accumulation of feces, food and litter which might attract such transmitters.

The eye worm of the dog has also been found in the cat, sheep, deer and man living in California. The dog and cat are the only animals known to be naturally infested. Infestations of sheep, deer and man are thought to be accidental.

## REFERENCES

- Price, E. W. 1931. A note on the occurrence of eye worms in dogs in the United States. No. Amer. Vet. 12:49-58 (Illus.).  
Stewart, M. A. 1940. Ovine thelaziasis. Jour. Amer. Vet. Med. Assoc. 96:486-490.  
—Harold A. Kjar, fall '43

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**A Fatality After Firing.** A four-year-old brown gelding of light horse breeding was presented at the Stange Memorial Clinic on December 27, 1942. The animal was showing lameness in all four legs. The general condition was poor.